

Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success
October 6, 2014 1:00PM – 3:00 PM
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: The Honorable Ralph S. Northam, Toni Cacace-Beshears, Karla Blasquez, William R. Ermatinger, Debra Ferguson, PhD, Catherine Hancock, MS, RN, Christine Harris, PhD, The Honorable Rob Krupicka, Aleta Lawson, Dr. Marissa Levine, MD, Angelica D. Light, Selena Childress-Mayo, The Honorable John Miller, Phyllis Mondak, Barbara Newlin, Kurt Newman, MD, The Honorable Chris Peace, Robert Pianta, PhD, Patricia A. Popp, PhD, John C. Purnell, Jr, The Honorable Beth Dillow Rhinehart, The Honorable Frank Ruff, Margaret Schultze, Lisa Specter-Dunaway, Steve Staples, EdD, Veronica Tate, Cheryl Thompson-Stacy, Anne-Marie Twohie, Dora G. Wynn

Introductions and swearing in of members - Lt. Governor Northam

- Members were formally sworn in by Kelly Mercer, Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth

Overview of purpose and Executive Order – Lt. Governor Northam

- Executive Order: “The Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success shall regularly report to the Governor and the Children’s Cabinet. It will conduct a comprehensive, statewide assessment of current programs, services, and local, state, and federal public resources that serve Virginia’s children ages 0-8. In coordination with the Children’s Cabinet and relevant state agencies, it will serve as a central coordinating entity to identify opportunities and develop recommendations for improvement including, but not limited to:
 - 1) Funding for preschool
 - 2) Kindergarten readiness
 - 3) Strategies to close the achievement gap in early elementary years
 - 4) The quality and accountability of child care programs and providers
 - 5) Coordination of services for at-risk families.”
- Why is early childhood development important to Virginia? Economic development.
- Lt. Governor Northam suggested the following workgroups for this council:
 - Kindergarten readiness (consistent curriculum, funding, education for the educator)
 - Health and Well-Being of Children (premature birth rates, etc.)
 - Child Care (affordable and quality child care)
- Governor McAuliffe wants recommendations from this council in June 2015

Presentation on federal preschool expansion grant – Kathy Glazer, Virginia Early Childhood Foundation

- Under new Federal Preschool Development Grant, Virginia is eligible (along with 34 other states) for up to \$17.5 million per year for up to 4 years to build, develop, and expand high quality preschool and serve additional high needs student. The goal is to provide more high quality day care to communities in Virginia.
- The following divisions will receive grant money (if approved):
 - Brunswick, Chesterfield, Norfolk, Petersburg, Richmond, Sussex, Winchester, Prince William, Fairfax, Giles, Henrico
 - Funding will provide for an additional 1,400 4 year olds to classrooms
- Funding will also be of use to parent education programs in coordination with preschool's
- The Federal grant will make decision notifications in December 2014. If approved the expansion will begin in Fall 2015.
- Lt. Governor asked for a motion to approve submitting an application for this grant, Senator Miller motioned for approval, and the motion passed unanimously.

Presentation on early childhood work by the Commission on Youth – Delegate Peace

- The Commission on Youth is comprised of nine members of the General Assembly (6 Delegates and 3 Senators) and three citizens appointed by the Governor. It was enacted by the General Assembly in 1989 to study issues, track federal legislation, and make recommendations on state policies affecting children and families.
- The commission is currently looking at issues dealing with the use of restraints for children with disabilities, court appointed attorneys in state cases, unlawful adoption of children, and unlawful collection of evidence.
- Next meeting is October 20th at 1PM House Room C of the General Assembly Building.

Small group discussion on early childhood priorities - Lt. Governor Northam

- The council was divided into four workgroups to discuss specific issues related to the Lt. Governor's recommendations of kindergarten readiness, health and well-being of children, and child care. The following are recommendation to work on based on the work groups discussions:
 - **Work Group One** (Delegate Peace)
 - Develop long term planning for childcare services (policy and administration). Publish studies for providers to use.
 - Communicate to families for an increase in childhood success
 - Identify early at-risk children working with the court system (health and well-being, childcare)
 - Develop best practice curriculum and licensing requirements for childcare providers (Kindergarten readiness)
 - **Work Group Two** (Pat Popp)
 - Focusing on education including:
 - Professional development
 - Early identification of risk factors (asthma, mental health issues, etc.)
 - Early childhood health and support including pre-natal support

- Articulate what is most effective when working with families (child care, home visiting, etc.)
- Work Group Three (Senator Miller):
 - Separate kindergarten readiness from childcare
 - Focus on now and funding later
 - Parental engagement in a child's learning
 - Identify all the groups involved in every issue
 - Connect educators and health care providers
 - Focus on outcomes
 - Childcare providers- accountability structure
 - Create specific recommendations for the proposal this council gives to the Governor
 - Suggested an additional work group "mental health for children workgroup" that focuses on appropriate services and support services
- Work Group Four (Delegate Krupicka)
 - Improve childcare regulations
 - Kindergarten readiness –
 - Giving educations proper information
 - Focus on children arriving to school healthy
 - Narrowing the gaps between kindergarten readiness and childcare
 - Quality of practitioner's minimum level (define) of education
 - Integrated data systems (suggested workgroup)
 - Streamline funding (simplify grant processes)
 - Explore cost-effective quality childcare models
 - Develop permanent alignment of agencies and workgroups,
 - Explore home visiting (finance models, return on investment, how to allow localities to receive monetary returns)
 - Integrate early education programs and public schools

Discussion on workgroup structure – Lt. Governor Northam

- Council members and stakeholders will receive an email to rank in order of interest the workgroup (topics will be narrowed and defined) for which you are most interested in serving.

Meeting schedule and other logistics – Holly Coy/ Lt. Governor Northam

- Winter Council Meeting: Receive Preliminary Workgroup Recommendations
Workgroups to continue their work, refine recommendations
 - Will occur during session, possibly after cross-over.
- Early Spring: Regional town halls for local input on recommendations
Workgroups to finalize recommendations to be presented to the full Council
- Spring Council Meeting: Vote on final recommendations
- June 2015: Provide final report to Governor McAuliffe